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AL-AHRAM CENTER ANALYZES GULF WAR

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NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

AL-AHRAM CENTER ANALYZES GULF WAR

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INTRODUCTION: GULF WAR TODAY, TOMORROW

Cairo AL-SIYASAH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic Jul 86 pp 76-77

[Article by Dr Usamah al-Ghazali Harb: "The Iraq-Iran War Today and Tomorrow"]

[Text] Approximately 3 months after the Iraq-Iran war broke out, the 63rd issue of AL-SIYASAH AL-DUWALIYAH, dated January 1981, came out with a special report on the war. One of the principal, predominant ideas contained in the studies of that report was that the war had been protracted and that it had severely drained the capabilities of both sides. Although none of these studies foresaw a quick end to the war looming on the horizon, none of them reflected the possibility that the war would have continued to this day. This war is about to complete its 6th year, and there are no real signs that its end is imminent. Except for the Vietnam war, it is the longest regional war on record in modern times.

At the present time this feature of the war--that is, its longevity--seems to be the one feature which most manifests its painfully tragic character and the difficulty of finding a solution for it. In specific terms, the protraction of the Iraq-Iran war to this date reflects more than one fact:

--First of all, it reflects the fact that the two warring parties approximate each other's power. This is a result of the fact that Iran's manpower makes up for Iraq's weapons, war materiel, and military know-how. So far, both sides have had almost 1 million casualties and many more people have been injured and driven out of their homes, not to mention the broad scale economic destruction in the region. Nevertheless, the inherent powers of both parties continue to help them function at that critical level which protects them from defeat but does not allow them to achieve victory.

--This longevity of the war reflects the reality of the monumental moral and ethical failure of Gulf, Arab or Islamic solidarity. The Iraq-Iran war has destroyed the very foundations of any local formula for Gulf security which could bring the parties of the Gulf together. It has replaced such a formula with a measure of hostilities, suspicions and disturbances never before seen in the region. Although the formation of the Gulf Cooperation Council did constitute an attempt by the countries of the region to protect themselves, under Saudi leadership, from the ravages of the war, the GCC did not project any positive ability to help bring that war to an end. The Iraq-Iran war has added a

new, profound split in the Arab world which could turn out to be one of its most serious contemporary splits. The Arab world did not assume a united position behind Iraq, as the Arab party in the battle, nor did it assume a balanced, homogeneous position which could have helped it carry out a real mediation effort to resolve the dispute. Although a number of international parties--at least--did try to assume cautious positions on the conflict, making the best of their relations with the two parties to the war, the countries of the Arab world chose the worst of positions. Some of them--perhaps to spite the Iraqi regime, more than anything else--declared full support for Iran, whereas others stood by Iraq. And the "moderate" attempts that were made by some continued to depend on their fear and anxiety, above all else, about the direct effects the war could have on them.

The ravages of the war dissipated all the positive influences which Islam could have exercised as a frame of reference shared by both parties to the war. Contrary to any illusions about the possibility that this religious framework could prescribe specific moral or ethical limits on stepping up the conflict, Islam was rather vigorously used to fan the fires of the war. Just as the Iraqis tried at the outset to strip their enemies of their Islamic character, the Iranians are now insisting on prolonging the war because they regard it as a war against non-believers and renegades. Thus, Iranians justify putting Iraqis to death and dying in the process of eliminating them. The Iraq-Iran war has seen and is still seeing today the worst violations of man's international law regulating armed conflicts. Strikes were carried out against the civilian areas of both sides to this war; prisoners were tortured and their humanity violated; and chemical weapons were used by brothers who share the same faith!

--Third, the longevity of the Iraq-Iran war reflects the superpowers' indifference to ending the war, as long as their interests are protected. That is, the superpowers are indifferent to ending the war as long as "the security of the Gulf"--specifically, as they see it--remains stable and as long as oil supplies are not threatened by the Gulf war. In fact, this war is being fought at a time when there is an oil glut, which is one of the reasons why oil prices have hit rock bottom. Thus, there is very little motivation to pay attention to this war. In their efforts to preserve their interests and their delicate balances all those superpowers try, each from his own perspective, to see to it that neither party achieves a decisive victory over the other. This is the only thing that is required. Whether the war comes to an end or goes on is no longer a matter of priority. The superpowers are benefiting from the war by selling weapons to both sides. They will subsequently benefit from "the peace" by taking part in rebuilding what was destroyed by the war.

Because of all these factors the Iraq-Iran war has thus become a war with no clear end in sight. The studies in this report are based on that specific premise. Actually, the longevity of any phenomenon induces those who study it to approach it from two perspectives. The first perspective takes advantage of the longevity of a phenomenon to study those specific aspects which could not have been clear in its earliest stages. That perspective usually justifies a reconsideration of the old facts in the light of new interpretations and information. There are two studies in this report that follow this approach. The first one attempts to consider Iraq's decision to go to war: that decision was made late in 1980. The second study deals with Israel's attitude toward that war.

The second perspective from which protracted phenomena are studied has to do with analyzing the reasons for their longevity as well as the different circumstances surrounding that longevity. Thus, there are studies in this report dealing with Iraq's and Iran's capabilities; with the legal implications of the continuation of the war; and with the possibilities of bringing it to an end. The studies deal with the military effectiveness of the Gulf countries in confronting the developments of the war, and they make a military evaluation of the latest stages of the war as well as the international efforts which have been made in an attempt to bring that war to an end.

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INNATE CAPABILITIES OF BELLIGERENTS

Cairo AL-SIYASAH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic Jul 86 pp 78-85

[Article by Muhammad al-Sa'id Idris: "The Innate Capabilities of Iraq and Iran and the Future of the War"]

[Text] Iraq's and Iran's innate capabilities include all the components of the military, the economy, the political system, or society which are available to them and which enable them to go on fighting the war.

These components had different effects on the development of the war. But it is the outcome of the war that ultimately concerns us. We are interested in finding out whether the components that make up each country's innate capabilities tend to support more war or rather the tendency to refuse to go on fighting, preferring instead to call for peace.

We can say that during the first years of the war the sum total of the components of power in each of the two countries supported the tendency to go on fighting. Although there were periods of time during which both countries wavered and weakened, other components pushed for more confrontation, thereby cancelling the negative effects of those that had been weakened.

But the matter is considerably different now. All the factors have come to favor a search for a peaceful solution to the conflict. If there is one exception to that, it has to do with Iran and the political factor in that country. Nevertheless, the influence of that factor depends on time and on the survival of the principal factor in Iran's political cohesiveness. That factor manifests itself in Imam Khomeyni's survival and in his continued ability to control political performance and dominate the sources of power and political influence inside Iran.

We can discuss more than one military component. There is the component of armaments and their source; there is the component of combat readiness; and there is that of operations and the extent to which operations are suited to achieve victory. There is also the component of a country's ability to mobilize people to confront battles and their requirements.

Early in the war Iran was able to have the upperhand because of the weapons which had been amassed by the Shah. However, Iran was unable to use those

weapons effectively because of the confusion and disorganization which befell its armed forces after the revolution broke out. Consequently, Iranians lost the relative advantage of having superior armaments. Afterwards, as the war continued and as Iranian troops began to collect their strength, the problem of providing weapons emerged, particularly since Iran had relied principally on the United States for its weapons. At that time U.S.-Iranian relations were as bad as they could be because of the American hostages who were being held in the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. (Footnote 1) (See "Al-Qissah al-Kamilah li Asrar 'Amaliyah al-Raha'in al-Amrikiyyin fi Tehran" [The Complete Story about the Secrets of the American Hostages Operation in Tehran] AL-ITTIHAD, 7 Apr 1983. See also "Al-Malaf al-Kamil lil Sira' al-Amriki-al-Irani" [The Full Report on the American-Iranian Conflict] AL-KHALIJ, 27 Jun 1980) Iran was unable to come up with an easy way to acquire the necessary spare parts, and that had a decisive effect on the effectiveness of military performance, particularly in the air force, which lost its relative superiority 1 year after the battles started and after Iraq's air force managed to achieve relative and then decisive superiority.

Iran's problem was exacerbated by problems pertaining to its ability to finance its weapons purchases, even from the black market. This was the case after Iran began having problems with exporting oil. Demand for oil was low; production and marketing were difficult in the wake of Iraq's concentrated attacks on Iran's sources of oil, particularly Kharj Island; and oil prices were falling.

At the present time the Iranian army is having a real problem: supplies are needed at the front lines. By contrast, the Iraqi army is extremely well-equipped now. Iraq managed to acquire advanced French weapons at a time when its relations with the Soviet Union were cool because of Moscow's attempt to remain neutral in this conflict. Moscow was either apprehensive about Iran's hostility, or it expected such hostility. Then Iraq started receiving shipments of advanced Soviet weapons once again, particularly after Taha Yasin Ramadan and then Tariq 'Aziz visited Moscow. Recently, late last December, President Saddam Husayn visited Moscow. That visit will most certainly have a major impact on Iraq's military capabilities. (Footnote 2) (Amin al-Siba'i, "Niqat fawqa al-Huruf al-Ghamidah" [Shedding Light on Mysterious Issues] AL-HAWADITH, London, No 1521, 27 Dec 1985)

At the present time the Iranian army has a strong need for weapons supplies. There is a shortage of tanks, supplies, spare parts and even gas masks.

What is even worse is that morale in the Iranian army is low now; the morale that is required under conditions of major confrontations is not there. The more graves there are in Iranian cities and villages for people who lost their lives in the war, the fainter the cries of those advocating "the holy war" against Iraq become. [At the same time], calls from the media for harsher penalties against individuals who avoid the military or who fail to perform their military service are becoming louder. (Footnote 3) (Hasan Fayid: "Al-Harb al-'Iraqiyah-al-Iraniyah: Hamaqah al-Hadir wa Zalam al-Mustaqbal" [The Iraq-Iran War: Present Foolishness, Future Gloom] AL-BAYAN, 11 Sept 1984)

The high percentage of war victims on the Iranian side makes one shudder. Citing approximate statistics on war casualty figures for both sides in 1983, the

British newspaper, THE TIMES, stated that Iranians lost approximately 300,000 soldiers and that their bodies filled up the graveyards. The newspaper stated that the authorities buried those victims in mass graves to avoid stirring people's emotions. At the same time the number of Iraqi casualties in the war was approximately 100,000. (Footnote 4) (Ibid.) These statistics are relative. If we were to take into consideration the fierce battles that were fought in the past 2 years along the fronts in the northern, central and southern regions, we could say that the number of casualties in both countries is alarming, not to mention the number of prisoners, the wounded and the handicapped whose presence provides live testimony on the horror of the battles and on the danger of a protracted war.

Iraq managed to achieve relative superiority in its weaponry, particularly after the first year of the war. During that first year the situation in Iraq was grave, and that was recognized by Tariq 'Aziz, Iraq's deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs. Now, Iraq is having the same problem, the weaponry problem, and it also has the problem of casualties. However, Iraqi fighters are more tenacious now after Iraq withdrew voluntarily to its international borders and announced its willingness to accept a cease-fire and to go along with all international mediation efforts. Thus, Iraqi fighters are now standing in a position of defending their national identity. Such a position is different from that of Iranian fighters who have to fight, not to defend their homeland, but to conquer the territory of others under the slogan of fighting a holy war about which they are beginning to have doubts.

Nevertheless, exorbitant expenses are draining the Iraqi budget, particularly in the wake of the problem with exporting Iraqi oil and the decline of oil prices in the international market. As far as Iraq is concerned, the protraction of the war is overburdening and endangering the country.

If we were to consider the destruction in military and civilian facilities in both Iraq and Iran and the failure of Iran's sweeping offensives, either the Najd 4 offensive in February 1984 or the Badr offensive in March 1985, (Footnote 5) (AL-KHALIJ) "Al-Sanah al-Sadisah fi Harb al-Khalij" [The Sixth Year of the Gulf War] 26 Sept 1985) we could realize the magnitude of the grave human losses that will be incurred if Iran carries out its large offensive for which it has been making preparations for months. According to information affirmed by Iran's media, Iran is mobilizing more than 1 million fighters.

According to the latest annual report for 1985-1986 by the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, the present military situation between the two countries is extremely grave. The report mentioned that the powers of both countries are still comparable and that Iraq's superiority in materiel is matched by Iran's superiority in manpower. The report indicated that at the present time Iran has 1,000 tanks; about 1,200 artillery guns; and about 80 functioning fighter airplanes. Iraq, however, has 2,900 tanks; 3,500 guns; 500 fighter airplanes; and approximately 100 military helicopters. (Footnote 6) (The International Institute for Strategic Studies, "Al-Tawazun al-'Askari wa al-Iqtisadi bayna al-'Iraq wa Iran" [Military and Economic Balance between Iraq and Iran] AL-KHALIJ 3 Oct 1985)

The report indicated that at the present time Iran's power was equal to Iraq's and that Iraq's superiority in weapons was countered by Iran's numerical superiority. The report included information about the sources of weapons that are used by both parties. The institute published a report that Iran had obtained weapons from a number of countries, including Israel, North Korea and Eastern Europe. According to the report, Iran also purchased weapons from the free western market. The report confirmed that Iran also had Chinese weapons.

The report added that Iraq had recently acquired weapons from Egypt, from the Soviet Union, China, North Korea, France, Portugal and Brazil. The report stated that it would be impossible to estimate the magnitude of the losses in weapons on both sides. (Footnote 7) (Ibid.)

In the economy the situation is much worse. Many industrial and oil facilities were completely destroyed after they were bombed. It was Iran which initiated such attacks. But then the Iraqi air force was able to seize the initiative after achieving air superiority. Iraq's air force fought fierce battles against Iran's oil facilities and wells in Abadan and Kharj. (Footnote 8) (HARB JARIDAH AL-KHALIJ "Harb al-Khalij Tahtadim al-'Aan wa lakin 'ala Jabhah Aswaq al-Bitrul" [The Gulf War Is Heating Up on the Oil Market Front] 8 Nov 1985)

But it seems that Iraq's economic problems are greater than Iran's even though Iraq did succeed in carrying out painful and destructive strikes against Iran's oil facilities. Iraq is also waging an oil war in the Gulf against tankers carrying Iranian oil.

The report by the aforementioned International Institute for Strategic Studies in London mentioned that Iraq's financial reserves had been depleted and that its international debts had grown significantly due to the fact that the condition of the oil market and the difficulty of transporting Iraqi oil had fallen short of providing the required monetary return.

The report indicated that because of the war Iraq was now relying quite heavily on foreign aid, assistance and loans. It is estimated that since 1980 such foreign assistance and loans amounted to 45 billion dollars. The report made it clear that Iran managed to maintain a reasonable rate of growth without actually getting any foreign assistance. (Footnote 9) (The International Institute for Strategic Studies, op. cit.)

The report stated that according to these data Iraq's only hope of getting out of this predicament seems to rest on continuing to launch attacks against Iran's oil facilities, oil wells and against tankers carrying oil from Iran.

Iran has managed to maintain the oil outlets on Kharj Island and the two smaller outlets on (Lavan) and (Siri) islands. Oil pumping operations from the oil fields in southwest Iran were stopped. After Iraq started bombing Kharj Island in 1983, using super (thunderbird) airplanes and (Exoset) missiles, Iran managed to build huge storage facilities in (Siri) that were out of reach of the new airplanes. Iran chartered a small number of super tankers to sail back and forth. Those shuttle journeys, which started in February 1985, enabled Iran to ensure a large amount of its oil needs. However, Iraq's subsequent tendency to

use its airplanes to bomb Kharj Island--those bombings began in August 1985--caused Iran to face real problems regarding its oil exports. Although Iran's oil reserves on Siri Island helped it solve the export problem, those reserves will not be enough in the future to help Iran confront any other potential dangers. (Footnote 10) ("The Gulf War Is Heating Up Now..." op. cit.)

Iraq has suffered from Iran's strikes against its outlets on the Gulf at a time when work on the pipeline which carries oil from the large oil field in Kirkuk to the Mediterranean had come to a standstill. Syria had broken that pipeline so it could obtain oil supplies from Iran at reduced prices. Work on that pipeline had come to a standstill also because of disputes between Iraq and Lebanon. Iraq had only one subsidiary pipeline going through Turkey.

By 1983 when demand for OPEC oil fell to such a level that compelled the organization to limit production as a means for raising prices, Iraq was producing a little over 1 million barrels of oil a day. Iran, however, was still producing about 2.5 million barrels of oil a day. (Footnote 11) (Ibid.)

A pipeline was completed in September 1985 to pump oil from Iraq's al-Ramilah and al-Zubayr oil fields to the Saudi oil pipeline, which carries crude oil from (al-Ghawar) oil field to the Yanbu' refinery on the Red Sea. This is only the first stage of a project to build a pipeline that will run alongside the (al-Fawbar-Yanbu') line which is to provide Iraqis with an additional export capacity of 1.6 million barrels of oil a day. In addition, there are two other projects to build two pipelines which are to carry Iraqi oil. The first pipeline will carry Iraqi oil across Jordan, and the second will carry the oil across Turkey. (Footnote 12) (Ibid.)

Nevertheless, the marketing problem and the problem of low prices persist. They constitute the principal factor restricting the positive ability to export oil. This is making the economic problem one of the principal factors in curbing the war and keeping it from going on so that the exorbitant costs of rebuilding the country can be saved and the people's living needs can be met.

Politically, we can say that the curve indicating support for the continuation of the war in Iran continues to go downward, contrary to what it was when the battles began.

In the early days of the war Iranians felt that Iraqi attacks coming under the Islamic Revolution's difficult circumstances and the blatant American attacks on the revolution were a serious blow to their national dignity. Iranians felt that a strong stand was required to repel the attack. (Footnote 13) (Dr Muhammad al-Ramihi, "Mantiqah al-Khalij al-'Arabi fi Daw' al-Mutaghayirat al-Duwaliyah al-Mustajidah" [The Arabian Gulf Area in Light of New International Variables] AL-SIYASAH AL-DUWALIYAH No 72 Apr 1983. See p 27 AL-KHALIJ, "Muntaziri Rasmiyyan Khalifah lil Khomeyni" [Officially, Muntaziri To Succeed Khomeyni] 24 Nov 1985. See also AL-KHALIJ, "Shabah Beirut laysa Ba'idan 'an Tehran" [The Ghost of Beirut Is not Far Away from Tehran], from LE MONDE, 8 Dec 1985)

The ruling Iranian elite, led by Imam Khomeyni, portrayed the war with Iraq as a holy war against world imperialism, but principally, against the United States.

At the outset of the war Imam Khomeyni's directives were indisputable, and the ruling elite was more tenacious and relentless.

However, lateral battles began looming on the horizon within the ranks of the ruling elite in Iran after the revolution had been in existence for a number of years, during which the revolution had faced a few setbacks in democracy, in government administration and in managing the country's economic activity. These lateral battles emerged in the wake of the continuing battles which had been thrust upon the combat fronts. A few observers went so far as to say that the continuation of the war depended on Imam Khomeyni's survival. But a few people think it is likely that there will be a gradual departure from Imam Khomeyni's directives. Such a departure was evident on two occasions. The first was when Imam Khomeyni announced the appointment of Imam Ayatollah Muntazeri his successor. A few expressed their displeasure with that decision because they did not want Muntazeri to succeed Khomeyni to the imamate. They cast doubts on his abilities, and they suggested that there were others who were better than he was. Then Muntazeri himself announced that he would not accept the appointment. That in itself is considered an open departure from the imam's directives. (Footnote 14) [Translator's note: There is no Footnote 14 in the Arabic text.] The other occasion occurred when a number of ayatollahs criticized the continuous nature of the war with Iraq even though they knew the war was being continued under a direct order from Imam Khomeyni.

In March 1985 THE FOREIGN REPORT Magazine, which is published by the British magazine, THE ECONOMIST, published a report about political conditions in Iran. In that report the magazine mentioned that some Iranian clergymen had expressed opposition to continuing the war with Iraq. The magazine stated that Ayatollah Hosein Qami Tabataba'i, "a high-ranking clergyman in (Meshed)," issued a formal legal opinion against the war. The Iranian clergyman stated, "The war between Iran and Iraq is sinful. Those who take part in that war by killing others or by being killed are sinners. Two Muslim communities are pitted against each other in this war; and each community is hurting and distorting the other. Large sums of money are also being wasted, and cities and villages are being destroyed. Women have lost their husbands, and children have lost their parents." (Footnote 15) (AL-KHALIJ, Ayatollah (Qumi) issues a formal legal opinion declaring the war between Iraq and Iran unlawful, 11 Mar 1985)

Ayatollah Shari'atmadari had criticized the war before Tabataba'i. Because of that he had been placed under mandatory house arrest. However, the existence of a general climate, which is becoming prevalent in Iran, calling for an end to the war helped Khomeyni overlook Tabataba'i's critical remarks about the war.

But Ayatollah Haj (Sayyid 'Abd-al-Qasim Munsuwi Kho'i), who is 95 years old and lives in al-Najaf in Iraq, also issued an opinion in March 1985 condemning the events in Iran for contradicting the principles of Islam and Islamic law. The opinion also condemned the war between Iran and Iraq because it was a war between Muslims. Therefore, it was incompatible with the tenets of Islam, and participation in that war was sinful. (Footnote 16) (AL-QABAS, 10 Nov 1985)

(Kho'i) who is considered the foremost scholar among the six great ayatollahs has millions of followers in Iran. His intervention against the Islamic Republic

is considered the most serious religious challenge that Ayatollah Khomeyni has faced during the years of his rule.

Furthermore, division is appearing in the ranks of the ruling elite. They are divided over who will succeed Khomeyni and over how the affairs of government are to be managed. Besides, the radical as well as the liberal opposition in Iran is strong, and the number of the opposition's followers in Iran is growing every day. (Footnote 17) (See Themil [sic?] Morris's analysis of the development of political conditions in Iran in the symposium of the British Magazine CROSS BOW; AL-KHALIJ, 20 Jul 1985)

If we were to take the social factor into account, we could say that the effects of social developments which came about in Iran as a result of the war started to appear and to affect political conditions. Those who were orphaned, those who were widowed, and the new generation which had not experienced the injustices of the Shah's rule were no longer able to endure any more of the burdens of this war, not to mention the political excesses in Iran.

Taken collectively, these factors affirm that Iran can no longer continue the war. They affirm that political division is inevitable after Khomeyni's death. Political division is also possible before Khomeyni's death if there is a major military setback in the coming months.

In addition, the ruling elite in Iran are starting to face psychological and political pressures which conflict with the principal tendencies of the Iranian Revolution. Because of the war and in order to acquire weapons Iran was compelled to deal secretly with the enemies of its tendencies. It was forced, for example, to do business with the United States and Israel, and it was forced to do business in the black market, selling and marketing stockpiles of Iranian oil. All these matters are creating real pressures, particularly for the Revolution's new generation, a generation that is principally interested in the Revolution's moral ideology.

As far as Iraq is concerned, matters are not much different, even though the fact that Iraq is acting in self-defense makes the ruling regime relatively safe from any of the people's reactions. That does not mean, however, that the negative effects of prolonging the war are [not] piling up on official levels and on popular levels as well, particularly since prolonging this war is beginning to impose numerous restrictions on the Iraqi leaders' freedom of action and freedom to make decisions. Iraq's oil marketing crisis and the fact that Iraq turned to Saudi Arabia's pipeline to market its oil gave Saudi Arabia an opportunity to apply pressure on Iraq and to control, to a certain extent, the decisions that are being made in that country. There is information which indicates that Saudi Arabia applied pressure on Iraq because it was afraid to provoke Iran into expanding the terrain of the war. (Footnote 18) (AL-KHALIJ, 8 Nov 1985) Also, the financing crisis, which is the result of a slump in the international oil market, and low oil prices will limit the Gulf states' ability to offer Iraq financial assistance at a time when Iraq has a dire need for it. But if such assistance is offered, it will be offered in accordance with the conditions that are set by the Gulf countries.

President Saddam Husayn's recent visit to Moscow and what has been said about his wish to confirm the Cooperation and Friendship Agreement between Baghdad and Moscow will also have positive as well as negative consequences, particularly since this visit was made at a time when Iran was preparing for its broad offensive against Iraq and what it calls its death blow to Iraq. (Footnote 19) (Official sources indicated that Iraq would receive all the Soviet weapons it is asking for after Saddam's visit to Moscow. See AL-KHALIJ, 18 Dec 1985) If such an offensive does take place, and if Moscow complies with Iraq's requests for support, the other side of that support will be greater reliance on foreign countries. And that reliance will place further restrictions on Iraq's freedom to make national decisions.

All this means that both countries have comparable breakdowns. The superiority that one country has in one area will be offset by its weakness in other areas. And that confirms the fact that Iran's as well as Iraq's ability to continue the war has become limited. It confirms the fact that the only meaning of prolonging the war is having further breakdowns on all levels. And such breakdowns will have implications on other evolving variables. A breakdown will have particular implications on the security situation in the Gulf and on the growing foreign influence in the area because of the imbalance among the principal regional powers, namely, Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, in favor of the latter. (Footnote 20) (Usamah al-Ghazali Harb and Muhammad al-Sa'id Idris, "Al-'Amn wa al-Sira' fi al-Khalij al-'Arabi" [Security and Conflict in the Arabian Gulf] AL-SIYASAH AL-DUWALIYAH, No 62, Oct 1981, p 14)

Oil, the Marketing Crisis and Returns

Oil, developments in oil production and marketing, and oil returns are considered among the foremost variables affecting the course of the war between Iraq and Iran. Military expenditures are financed by oil returns, which are also the principal source for development and daily spending.

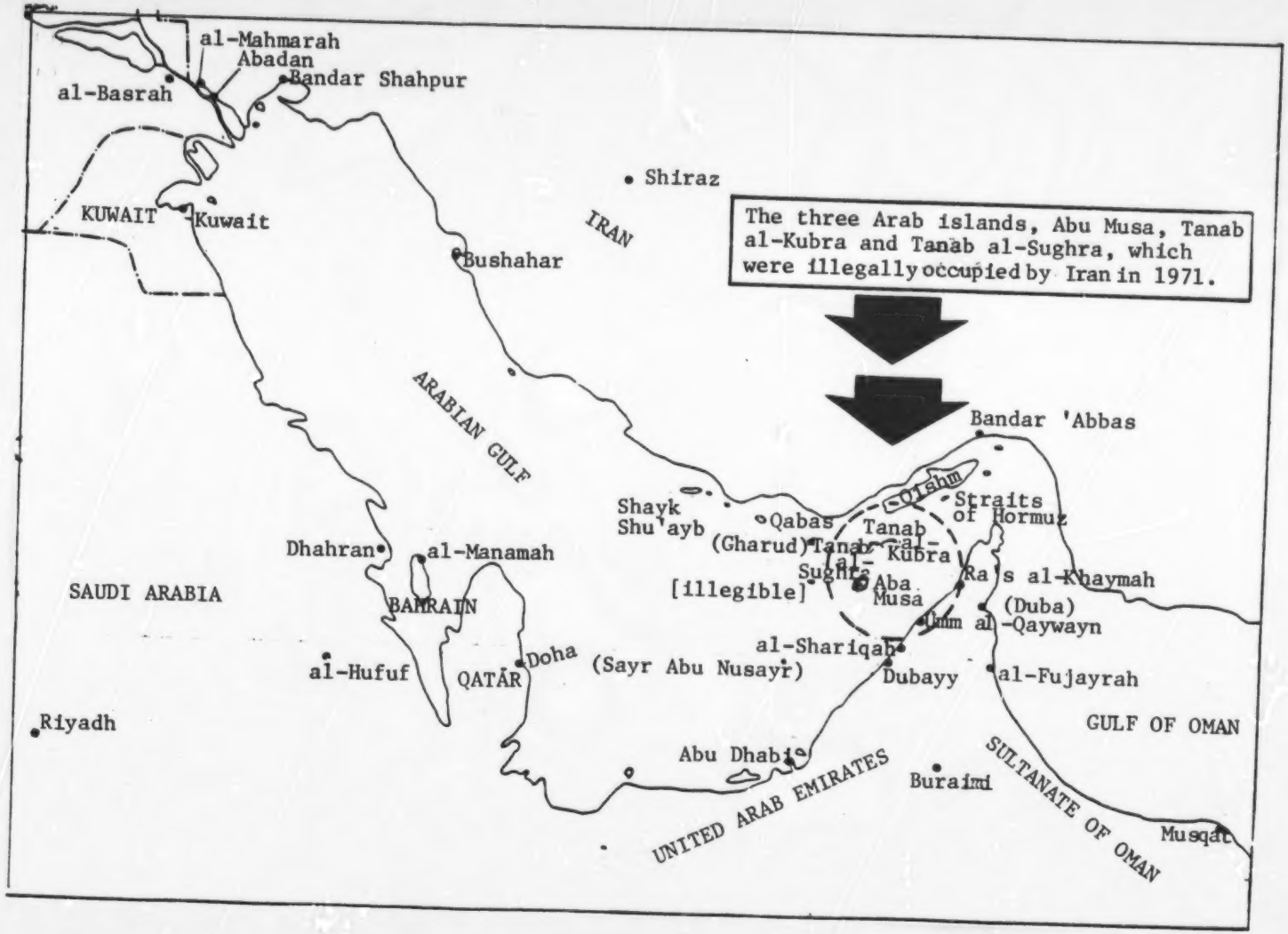
As previously indicated, both countries were aware of the importance of oil as a strategic weapon in their ongoing conflict. That is why each one of the two countries was inclined to interfere with the other's oil exports by striking its oil facilities and wells, by bombing oil tankers, or by forming an alliance with a third party. This is what Iran did with Syria, preventing Iraq from exporting its oil from Syrian shores. Despite their importance, these methods failed to put a complete stop to the ability of either country to export its oil. However, the negative effect that these methods had on both countries came from other outside factors that neither country had anything to do with. The danger of that effect is that it extends into the future and will have clear implications on the decision to fight or to make peace in coming months.

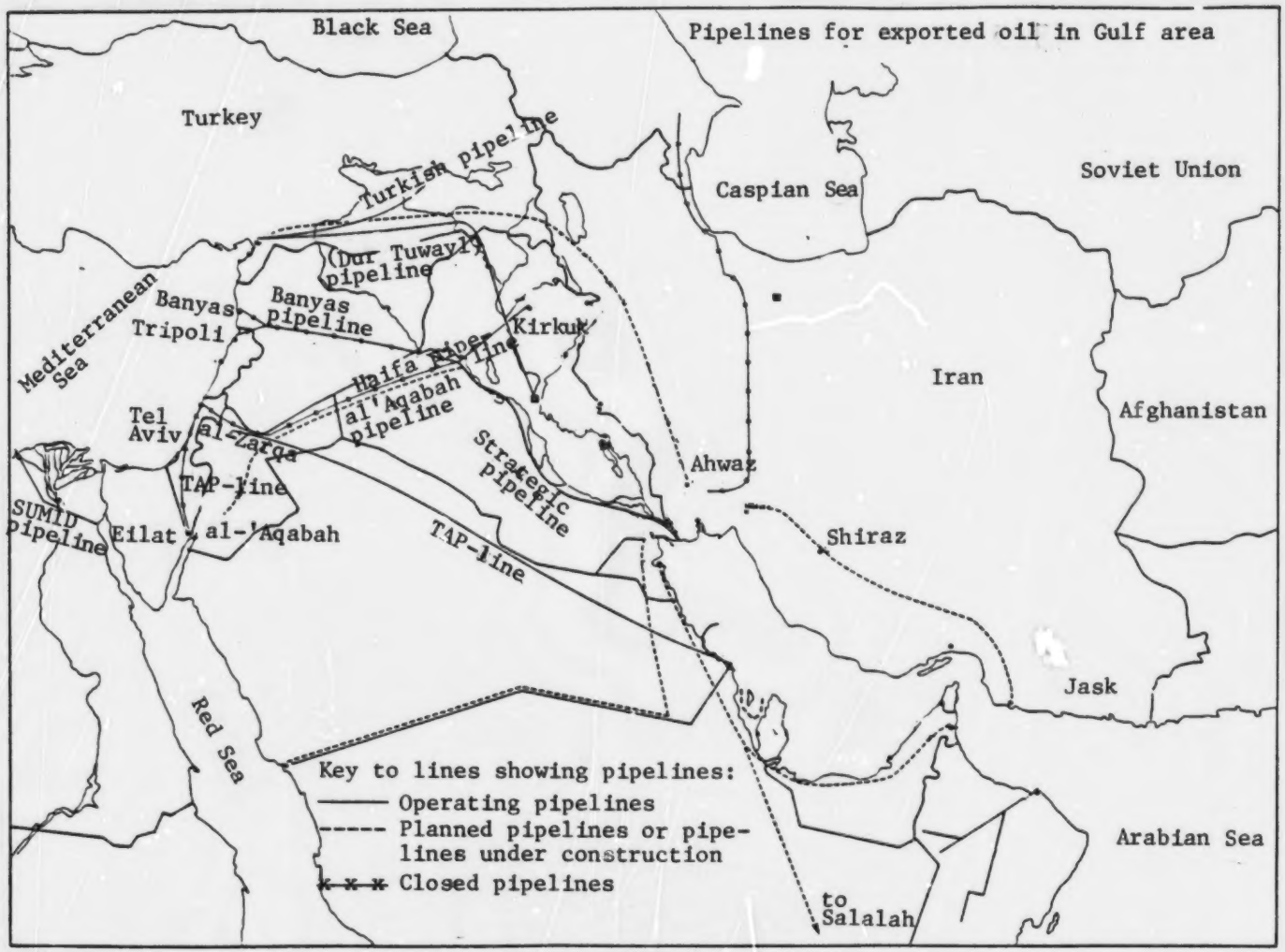
This effect came from the international oil market which experienced a noticeable slump. Oil prices began to fall as a result of the oppressive effect the oil surplus had on the oil market. Oil returns for all oil exporting countries, especially the OPEC countries, fell. In the meantime scientific estimates indicate that these returns are expected to decline further in the coming years until 1990. (Footnote 21) (Robert Mabro: "Al-'Athar al-Iqtisadiyah li Inkhifad Talab al-Taqah Mustaqbalan 'ala al-'Alam al-'Arabi" [The Economic Consequences

to the Arab World of the Future Decline in Demand for Energy] AL-MUSTAQBAL AL-'ARABI No 78 Aug 1985, pp 54-56) In the early eighties demand for oil from OPEC, an organization whose core members include the Arab oil countries as well as Iran, fell sharply from the maximum level in 1979 of 30 to 31 million barrels of oil a day to its lowest level of 16 to 17 million barrels of oil a day in 1984 and 1985. Oil production in the Arab oil countries also declined during that period from 21 million barrels of oil a day to 10 million barrels of oil a day. (Footnote 22) (The source was calculated from "Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Annual Statistical Bulletin" (Geneva: OPEC, (1970-1983), and PETROLEUM INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY, 1984)

This decline in demand was accompanied by a drop in prices. In 1982 the real official price for Arab oil was 34 dollars per barrel. In March 1983 that price fell to 29 dollars. In January 1985 the price for a barrel of oil was 28 dollars. The double effect that reduced production and falling prices had on returns was significant. Most predictions expect this worrisome condition--low levels of demand and low prices--to continue through the eighties and until the mid-nineties. (Footnote 23) (Mabro, op. cit.) Future estimates indicate that the decline in returns, which started out with a sharp decline in 1982, is expected to peak in 1988-1989, but this will be followed by a gradual improvement upward that will last for 10 years. Only by 1998-1999 will returns improve and reach the basic level. Therefore, the anticipated period of the "crisis in returns" is expected to be a very lengthy one. From beginning to end, it is expected to last for about 16 or 17 years. (Footnote 24) (Ibid.)

What do these estimates mean to the future of the war between Iraq and Iran? If oil returns continue to decline for at least the next 5 years, the effects of that on the two countries are obvious. As far as Iraq is concerned the effects of declining returns will be reflected not only on Iraqi returns, but also on the support Iraq receives from Arab countries in the Gulf. These countries, which are suffering from a depressed economy and from a decline in their own development programs, will not be able to provide Iraq with the previous rates of support. Such support, of course, will also be linked with pressures that will be placed on Iraq to force it to curb its operations out of fear of any Iranian reprisals expanding the terrain of the war and involving the countries of the region. As far as Iran is concerned, declining returns will have a serious effect on weapons supplies and on the social costs of living for a broad sector of citizens who have been suffering from crushing economic crises since the outbreak of the revolution. Their displeasure with the Iranian regime's public policies has manifested itself in their opposition to prolonging the war and to their participation in it. And this is happening at a time when the manpower factor is considered the principal factor in Iran's favor in its conflict with Iraq. On the other hand, Iraq will not stop destroying Iranian oil facilities to deprive Iran of the source of funding its military campaigns. Iraq wants to put an end to the war which Iran does not want to end. This means that in the future oil will become a factor, and it will be used to apply pressure to end the war and to seek peace because the alternative to that, in the wake of declining returns, is to put pressure on the people, despite everything they had to go through, and make them finance military expenditures. Such a tendency carries sufficient threats to the ruling regimes in both countries so as to force them to accept a peaceful solution submissively. Otherwise, they would become involved in a bloody confrontation with the people and with opposition forces. Guns would be aimed at the people inside the country, bringing the war to a dramatic end on the battle fronts and putting an end as well to those regimes that are in power.


al-Mahmarah
Abadan
Bandar Shahpur
al-Basrah
Shiraz
KUWAIT
Kuwait
IRAN
Bushahar
The three Arab islands, Abu Musa, Tanab al-Kubra and Tanab al-Sughra, which were illegally occupied by Iran in 1971.
ARABIAN GULF
Bandar 'Abbas
Qishm
Straits of Hormuz
Shayk Shu'ayb
Qabas (Gharud)
Tanab al-Kubra
Tanab al-Sughra
Abu Musa
[illegible]
Ra's al-Khaymah
(Duba)
Umm al-Qaywayn
al-Shariqah
Dubayy
al-Fujayrah
Dhahran
al-Manamah
SAUDI ARABIA
BAHRAIN
al-Hufuf
Doha
QATAR
(Sayr Abu Nusayr)
Riyadh
GULF OF OMAN
Abu Dhabi
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
Buraimi
SULTANATE OF OMAN
Musqat


Pipelines for exported oil in Gulf area
Black Sea
Turkey
Turkish pipeline
Soviet Union
Caspian Sea
(Dur Tuwayl) pipeline
Banyas pipeline
Banyas
Tripoli
Mediterranean Sea
Kirkuk
Haifa Pipeline
al 'Aqabah pipeline
Iran
Afghanistan
Tel Aviv
al-Zarqa
Strategic pipeline
Ahwaz
TAP-line
SUMID pipeline
Eilat
al-'Aqabah
TAP-line
Shiraz
Jask
Red Sea
Key to lines showing pipelines:
Operating pipelines
Planned pipelines or pipelines under construction
Closed pipelines
Arabian Sea
to Salalah

ISRAEL'S ROLE IN WAR

Cairo AL-SIYASAH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic Jul 86 pp 108-111

[Article by Midhat al-Zahid: "Israel and the Iraq-Iran War"]

[Text] The outbreak of the Gulf war was tantamount to a golden opportunity for Israel, which found itself in an unenviable position after the Iranian Revolution. This is because a regional power, which could join the ranks of its enemies, had emerged from that war. And that was dangerous for Israel.

This war gave Israel the opportunity not only to neutralize this potential danger, but also to distract Iraq with a secondary conflict that would keep it out of a confrontation with it. The Gulf war would weaken the possibilities of reviving the northeastern front, and, according to the attitude toward the war, it would add new inflammatory material to the issues that are being disputed in the Arab world.

Indeed, the war was also an opportunity for stimulating the policy of granting the United States military facilities in the Gulf countries. The war created a new spending category for using up the financial surplus (the petrodollars) in a secondary conflict. It also isolated the Syrian regime, which sided with Iran. All this adds up to net gains for Israel.

Israel and Iran: Changing Relations

Israeli policy promptly devoted its attention to the establishment of cooperative and friendly relations with Iran. Israel sought an alliance with Iran which is, after all, a Middle Eastern country. Furthermore, it is an Islamic country that has its importance in international politics and strategy because of its long borders with the Soviet Union, its tremendous oil resources, its dense population, its military capabilities, its location in central Asia and its access to the Arabian Gulf and the Straits of Hormuz through which the East's as well as the West's trade travels.

Iran has an additional importance to Israeli strategic thinking because of its location on the Asian flank of the Arab world. Iran can be used to ward off attempts to isolate Israel, and it can be used as a staging point for any offensive strategy by relying on traditional border disputes. Israel could also rely on the mutual use of national minority movements, and the opportunity to do

that exists on the borders of the African and Asian flanks of the Arab world, where the influences of Arab and Islamic cultures overlap with those of neighboring cultures.

It is on the basis of that view that Israeli and American policy, with Iran's cooperation, deliberately utilized the separatist tendencies in the Kurdish Movement to put pressure on Iraq and overtax it whenever it moved away from the western alliance.

Numerous documents confirming that tendency to use Iran to put pressure on Iraq and distract it with secondary conflicts have surfaced. Among these documents is a report by the (Pike) Committee, which was formed by the U.S. Congress.

That report revealed the role played by Israel and the United States in arming, financing and training a few divisions of the Kurdish Movement. (Footnote 1) (See Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal, "Al-Hal wa al-Harb" [The Solution and the War], Al-Matbu'at Company for Distribution and Publishing, Beirut, 1977. See also Mahmud 'Awad, "Wa 'Alaykum al-Salam" [And Peace Be with You] Dar al-Mustaqbal al-'Arabi [The Arab Future Publishing Firm], Cairo, 1984) But the most important documents of all those which revealed the cooperation between Israel and Iran against Iraq were those which were seized by Iranian students when they stormed the U.S. Embassy building in Tehran.

One of these documents deals with the limits and objectives of this cooperation in the following manner:

Throughout the past years Israelis have made efforts to break the siege which Arab countries set up around Israel with the cooperation of Islamic, non-Arab countries in the Near East.

Late in 1956 official tripartite relations were established through the Trident Organization between Moussade; the National Security Agency in Turkey, (TNSA); and the National Organization for Security and Intelligence in Iran, Savac.

Moussade helped Savac in its activities, and it also helped the Kurds in Iraq. (Footnote 2) (Majdi Nasif: "Al-Watha'iq al-Sirriyah lil Mukhabarat al-Amrikiyah" [Secret U.S. Intelligence Documents] Al-Hamwafi Printing and Publishing [Company], Aden, 1984)

The Iranian Revolution interrupted this course. After having had cooperative relations and an alliance with Israel, the new authority in Iran broke relations with that country, expelled its diplomatic mission from Iran, gave full recognition to the PLO and announced that it was calling for a holy war to liberate Jerusalem.

Thus, as the network of Iran's local, regional and international relations after the revolution changed, Israel's tendency to use the outlying border regions to put pressure on the Arab world found itself in a predicament.

The Gulf war offered a way out of this predicament. It altered the Israeli--and the American--objective of overtaxing the country by putting pressure on its

outlying areas. Israel's objective now was to overtax Iraq's heartland as well as its outlying areas. Ever since the fighting broke out, it is this difference which has so far distinguished the Israeli approach.

The aim of overtaxing both Iraq and Iran is to render both of them unable to embark on any other conflict. The aim is to use the war to introduce decisive changes in the positions of both or one of the parties so as to achieve what would serve Israeli security interests.

No Peace and No Settlement

Actually it was the development that occurred in the Iranian position which gave shape to the Israeli idea of prolonging the war by maintaining a total balance of powers. This would give both parties an opportunity to go on fighting, but it would give neither of them the means by which either one could settle the war.

The success of this idea is not due to any extraordinary capabilities of Israel's strategy, but rather to the specific nature of this war and the international equation which governs it. It is also due to the points on which Israel's strategy toward the Gulf war agrees with U.S. and western strategy in general.

It is easy to understand why Israeli and U.S. strategy would reject a defeat for Iran because such a defeat could lead Iran, a country that is adjacent to the Soviet Union, into a state of chaos. Such chaos would end in victory for the left in the wake of the bankruptcy of the Shah's western tendency and of Khomeyni's Islamic tendency.

However, Israeli strategy is putting equal emphasis also on the dangers of an Iranian victory because of the threat such a victory would imply to Gulf countries who favor the West.

Of no less importance is the symbolic significance that a victory for a radical Islamic regime would have in all the Arab world, particularly in the Gulf states and in Lebanon where a Shi'ite uprising ought to be expected. (Footnote 3) (See the interview in THE JERUSALEM POST with (Dahiris Chifeld), a specialist in Iranian affairs at Haifa University, and (Amazia Bram), a lecturer on Iraqi affairs, 8 Mar 1984)

An Iranian victory would also have other implications which, because of their associations with the sectarian implications of the conflict in Iraq and the total political considerations of Israel's strategy, would stir up some controversy. And that ought to give us pause.

The Sectarian Implication

In his well-known article, "A Strategy for Israel in the Eighties," (Odid Yuvon) wrote [the following] in favor of an Iranian victory: "The Iraq-Iran war will tear up Iraq into pieces. It will cause the country to collapse before it can make preparations for a conflict against us on a broad front." (Za'if Chev), military correspondent for HA'ARETZ, also came out with a similar evaluation

when he said, "From the point of view of Israeli interests, the best thing that can happen to Iraq would be the disintegration of the country into a Shi'ite state, a Sunni state and a separate Kurdish state." (Footnote 4) (HA'ARETZ, 3 Jun 1982)

This tendency, which advocates enabling Iran to score a victory over Iraq, was not always the predominant one in Israel because it had ignored facts which professors at Haifa University and a number of Israeli thinkers had insisted upon. (Footnote 5) (See THE JERUSALEM POST symposium, op. cit.)

Although Israeli policy does favor the sectarian disintegration of Iraq, it is that team's point of view that the ongoing war does not necessarily lead to that.

Still going along with that view, an Iranian victory could do the opposite. It could bring to power a central government in Iraq that would be loyal to Iran.

An alliance could emerge between Syria, Iraq and Iran, threatening to revive the northern and eastern fronts, and that would be the worst threat to Israel's security.

The background which this team relies upon is this: until radical changes are made in Iran's positions, using the war to overtax Iran--provided that does not force it to surrender--would be the ideal situation for Israel's interests in both Iraq and Iran.

This tendency reveals the pragmatic nature of Israel's policy. It is a policy that does not blindly follow the effect of any sectarian plan without regarding the concrete considerations of Israel's gains and losses.

As we will shortly see, Israel's sale of weapons to Iran is not inconsistent with this tendency.

Iraq: No Victory and No Defeat

It is also easy to understand the reasons for Israel's strategy of blocking an Iraqi victory.

From Israel's point of view Iraq is still straddling the fence: it has not severed all its relations with the rejection front, and it has not totally aligned itself with the moderates' camp. Seen from that perspective, victory for Iraq could strengthen its regional position, particularly in the Gulf. It may induce the coastal areas of the Gulf to unite under the Iraqi flag either in a limited regional plan or a comprehensive Arab one.

But Israel is also focusing on another extremely important angle because an Iraqi victory would give the Iraqi army moral stature as well as military experience, combat efficiency and more armaments. And that could constitute a threat to Israel's security.

It is that angle in particular which induced a few observers in Israel to criticize the tactic of prolonging the war. They see that tactic as one which carries the possibility of strengthening the Iraqi military by means of the experience Iraq's military officers will acquire in the fields of combat.

However, Eliahu Saul Peter, political editor for HA'ARETZ, raised that question and answered it in a different manner.

Peter says, "There are those who believe that prolonging the war will cause the Iraqi army to come out of this war with practical military experience which can be used against Israel in the future. This opinion is incorrect because as long as the war goes on, Israel will be able to take advantage of the major division among the Arabs which was caused by the war. For us, this is an important goal, and, as far as we are concerned, it is a desirable one. To be specific, this means that as long as the war goes on, there will be no hope of establishing a united Arab front against Israel."

Peter adds, "The Arabs' biggest concern will not be the Zionist threat, but rather the Iranian threat. Finally, the Palestinian question is no longer the central question which attracts the most interest and stirs up the most worry in the Arab world." (Footnote 6) (AL-TALI'AH AL-'ARABIYAH, No 50, 22 Apr 1984)

Regardless of the "positive" consequences for Israel of prolonging the war, and because prolonging the war does carry the possibility of improving the combat efficiency of the Iraqi military, Israel directed a military strike against Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981. The effect such an action had on morale, and all its other effects as well, cannot have gone unnoticed.

Comprised in this tendency, whose aim is to abort any progress made by Iraq's military, is the indication made by other reports that Israel, with the cooperation of the U.S. general staff organization, has prepared military plans to strike chemical weapons factories and storage facilities in Iraq.

In other words, Israeli strategy is not ignoring the "negative" effects of prolonging the war.

If the previous considerations justify the Israeli notion of rejecting an Iraqi victory, the previously mentioned reasons for rejecting an Iranian victory explain to us that a defeat for Iraq is being ruled out at this stage in the Israeli view as one of the goals of Israel's security theory.

In addition to these reasons, one may add that there is an awareness within Israeli strategy of the nature of the shift in the Iraqi regime's positions. This shift is illustrated by Iraq's withdrawal from the rejection front, by its role in the Baghdad Summit, and by the estrangement between Iraq and Syria and Iraq and Libya. Furthermore, Iraq has special relations with Saudi Arabia, and it has a developing alliance with Jordan and Egypt. Nevertheless, Israeli thinking appreciates the fact that such a shift falls far short of being adequate for having peaceful relations.

In fact, (Amaziya Bram) went even further by confirming the possibility that Israel--if compelled by circumstances--might help Iraq avoid defeat on the grounds that Saddam Husayn may have sent a tacit message to Israel.

Saddam Husayn had recently approved projects to build an oil pipeline that would run west across 'Aqabah and Yanbu' to Saudi Arabia's shores on the Red Sea.

Both pipelines will pass through territory governed by Arab royal regimes which, in the past, had been targeted for sharp attacks by radical, rejectionist Iraq.

To a large extent, these pipelines will also be subject to Israeli attack.

Can such an open declaration of Iraq's vulnerability to a possible Israeli attack be seen as a sign that it would not be altogether impossible to have a tacit agreement between Israel and a rejectionist, radical Arab state such as Saddam Husayn's Iraq? (Footnote 7) (THE JERUSALEM POST symposium, op.cit.)

Comprehensive Balance of Powers

As we've seen, that Israeli view depends, on the one hand, on prolonging the war and using it to extinguish the glow of the Iranian Revolution. On the other hand, it depends on using the war to effect a shift in Iraq in accordance with the interests of Israel's security theory.

The success of that view depends on Israel's ability, as well as that of the United States and the West, to keep both sides fighting. It also depends on the considerations of other international powers, chief among which, of course, is the Soviet Union.

Other reports indicated that Israel was willing to sell Iraq weapons. Iraq, however, has not issued any confirmation of these news reports.

Nevertheless, it has been noticed that these reports did not surface until after the recent success achieved by Iranian forces. Iranian forces penetrated Iraqi lines and set up their positions on al-Faw Island.

New Shifts

These shifts include the situation on the combat field as well as the situation in the entire Gulf area. Israel's anticipated response to developments in the military situation which favor Iran is the temporary suspension of weapons sales.

But the situation in the Gulf area is more complicated. In Israel's politics, will the loss of the Iranian Revolution's luster minimize the dangers that an Iranian victory could have on stability in the region? Will the decline of the oil age and the relative weakness of this region's clout in international strategy lead to a decline in Israel's interest in the Gulf war?

There does not seem to be any sign of that. The fact that the war is still going on strengthens Israel's standing in the region. It enhances its value in the western alliance, and it undermines the standing of its enemies.

If Israel considers itself the greatest winner as a result of the Arabs' shrinking economic power, and all the political possibilities entailed by that, such

a consideration does not mean that Israel will offer either Iraq or Iran any free gifts. This means that the tactic of prolonging the war is one that is likely to continue in Israeli thinking. This tactic is included in a more comprehensive way of thinking whose aim is to overwhelm the Arab world in secondary conflicts, either between its feuding blocs, its parties, or between those and other regional powers. Accordingly, this Israeli bias for a final resolution in favor of one of the parties in the Gulf war will continue to depend upon a decisive change in that party's positions.

The point at which the American way of thinking and the Israeli way of thinking converge is clear in the declaration made by Richard Murphy, assistant to the U.S. secretary of state. Mr Murphy made that point clear when he testified in front of a congressional subcommittee and said, "The principal position of the U.S. government toward the war is that any victory achieved by either party is militarily unachievable and strategically undesirable because victory by either one of the parties will have consequences that will destabilize the entire region." (Footnote 8) (AL-TALI'AH AL-'ARABIYAH, No 59, 25 Jun 1984)

Thus, military assistance to Iran is being controlled so as to make it impossible for Iran to settle the conflict or suffer defeat.

Direct or indirect sales of Israeli weapons to Iran are made in that context. In other words, any flow or interruption of weapons exports does not mean a change in Israel's or in the United States' way of thinking. It rather reflects both parties' evaluations of which party has the upperhand at one or another stage.

The Reagan administration had called upon Israel and Britain to refrain from offering weapons on the basis of the fact that the situation had changed in Iran's favor. (Footnote 9) (See THE NEW YORK TIMES 5 Mar 1984)

In general, Israel's way of thinking is a result of evaluating the components of Iran's superiority in a manner that would not allow an Iraqi victory. Iran has more people than Iraq: [a ratio of] three to one. There is greater homogeneity among Iran's population, 90 percent of whom are Shi'ites; whereas in Iraq 55 percent of the population are Shi'ites, 15 percent are Kurds and 30 percent are Sunnis. Demographically speaking, Iraq's population is concentrated in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and in the Shatt al-'Arab area, whereas Iran's population is scattered over vast areas of the country.

This is the reason why neither Israel nor the United States is making its entire weapons arsenal available to Iran.

Neither one of these parties is also trying to make support for Iran match the Soviet Union's considerable support to Iraq. That support is based on a Soviet assessment of the points of agreement between Iran's policy and the U.S. policy in central Asia.

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CSO: 4404/403

ANALYSIS OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Cairo AL-SIYASAH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic Jul 86 pp 112-115

[Article by Maj Gen Tal'at Ahmad Muslim: "The New Stage in the Gulf War: a Critical, Analytical Study"]

[Text] The 9th of February 1986 marked the beginning of a new stage in this war which started its sixth year last September. Although every day in the armed conflict illustrates something new in the war, the evening of that day ushered new assumptions which illustrate a change in the nature of the conflict. For the first time since the onset of the conflict Iran was able to seize relatively large sectors of Iraqi territory and to hold on to this territory for a relatively long period of time. Iran had tried to do this before, but when it did, it quickly lost the greater part of the territory it had seized. This shift was accompanied by the emergence of Iran's air force as an effective factor in the armed conflict after a period of time during which that air force had emerged only in a few desperate attempts to establish its existence. The impending breakdown of the armed conflict brought about a change in the course of operations. Such change had disappeared from the phenomena of the armed conflict since 1982. What is meant by that is that Iraqi forces shifted their operations: they attacked inside Iranian territory. Iraq had refrained from such attacks since withdrawing its forces from Iranian territory as a peace initiative on its part carried out to achieve a peaceful settlement of the conflict. Finally, the new stage caused the remaining countries of the Gulf to have a sense of being threatened by Iran and to become aware of the threat to navigation in the Gulf.

The new stage of the conflict involved new applications of the principles of war and tactics. These applications included correcting previous conditions and allowing some of the mistakes which characterized previous stages to continue. The effects of the new developments on the conduct of regional and world political leaders could also point to the following possibilities for change in this conflict.

Before discussing and analyzing the components of the new stage, reference must be made to the fact that the widespread information about the developments of the conflict depends to a large degree on reports from both sides or on news relayed by press agencies from the sources of both sides. Every observer notices that even the military bulletins of both sides are characterized by a high level of propaganda. These bulletins come closer to filling the bill for psychological

warfare than that of providing information. Their aim is to overplay and underscore the consequences of the acts carried out by the side which is issuing the bulletin and downplay those of the acts that are carried out by the other side. In fact, some news usually contains inaccurate information which is included either to mislead the other side or to influence its morale. Consequently, anyone who has to study this matter has to rely on his own experience and on his own senses regarding classifying this information and distinguishing what is true from what is not.

Circumstances Preceding the Onset of Operations

If we regard these operations to be the first of their kind after the major Iranian offensive of March 1985--an offensive which led to massive losses among the attacking Iranian forces--[we realize that] that offensive failed after Iraq launched its counter-offensive at the end of the month. It was alleged that Iraqi troops used chemical weapons in combat. Since then, Iran has been trying to reorganize its forces and improve its military balance, particularly its balance of trade. Iran has been trying to prepare for future operations by defining its objectives and making the necessary decisions and plans to meet them. Iran has also been receiving training on what is required to implement the plan and ensure technical and administrative [support] for it.

While preparations were being made, Iran suffered from the declared boycott that was imposed on it by the superpowers because of its involvement in the conflict and its rejection of peaceful initiatives from Iraq. Iran had also rejected various international mediation efforts. Therefore, Iran turned to a few exporters, such as the People's Republic of China, North Korea and Argentina who are not bound by the rules of such bans. At the same time it tried to acquire some weapons and equipment from some western countries, including the United States. It tried to acquire those by clandestine or non-official means and by using middlemen or smuggling operations. Such efforts were focused primarily on obtaining spare parts for equipment owned by Iran and manufactured by these countries and on obtaining the necessary ammunition for the weapons which are manufactured by these countries. Iran took advantage of the fact that some of these countries, for political or economic reasons, overlooked such smuggling activities.

Iran's diplomatic preparations for future operations consisted of having senior Iranian officials visit the Arab countries, particularly the Arabian Gulf states. It seems that the aim of these visits was to assure the leaders of the Gulf states that operations would not interfere with these countries. Iranian officials assured the leaders of the Gulf states that if their countries did not cooperate with Iraq, they will remain far away from the dangers of the war. That was an implied threat to those countries if they cooperated with Iraq.

Iran tried to prepare the Iranian economy for the operations by attempting to repair the principal oil outlet on Kharj Island. It tried to transport the oil on small tankers which would shuttle back and forth between Kharj and Siri islands. Then it expanded those sea journeys to the port of Jask on the Indian Ocean outside the Arabian Gulf. Iran intends [to lay] an oil pipeline from the fields of Ahwaz and surrounding areas to the port of Jask and to an outlet port from which it can export its oil. Iran also built offshore sea platforms off

Kharj Island and laid a few kilometers of pipes from the shores of (Kindah) to other remote locations. It also agreed with a number of western oil companies to build small man-made ports to which the oil could be pumped far from Kharj. Iran has concentrated its efforts on shifting a major portion of the pipeline transporting oil to the principal pumping station, which is called (Kindah), to offshore outlets extending for scores of kilometers along the Iranian coast and far away from Kharj.

The preparation of Iran's armed forces included mobilizing Iran's manpower, making plans, and, in addition to what has already been mentioned about arming the armed forces, training. Iran's armed forces received training, especially in crossing water barriers, penetrating fortified locations, protecting themselves from chemical weapons, and setting up makeshift bridges across water barriers.

On the other side, Iraq made its preparations for the operations. The armed forces were furnished with the weapons, ammunition and training they needed, and the state's territory was prepared for staging operations. This was particularly evident in the high-level fortifications that were prepared in the southern sector. The observations field and firing range were prepared for what has been called the fierce battle of al-Qasab and al-Bardi, and the national economy was prepared for operations by continuing to pursue the development plan. Diplomatic preparations were made by continuing to announce that Iraq would accept a just, peaceful settlement of the conflict. Iraq was able to change much of prevailing public opinion in many countries of the world, which, early in the conflict, had perceived Iraq as an aggressive nation. That perception was accompanied and paralleled by continued Iraqi pressure on the Iranian economy. This was accomplished principally by air strikes launched by Iraq against Iran's principal oil outlet on Kharj Island, against the oil pumping complex in (Kindah), the offshore platforms off the shores of Kharj Island, the large offshore outlets which are close to Iran's oil facilities, and the tankers that were shuttling back and forth between Kharj and Siri islands. Five out of eight tankers were destroyed.

An Analysis of a Few Stages in the Progress of Operations

The Attack on al-Faw: How the Surprise Was Achieved

The Iranian offensive had been expected for a long period of time; it had been expected since the end of 1985. Iraq's air force launched air strikes against the assembled troops that were preparing for the offensive, concentrating their bombardment in the last days on Hamiyah Camp in the south. Nevertheless, the attack took Iraqi troops in al-Faw by surprise. This is evident in the speed with which Iranian troops succeeded in sweeping through the greater portion of al-Faw Peninsula. The Iraqi troops which counterattacked to regain that part of the peninsula were generally unable to regain those parts. Their very slow progress makes it more likely, for several reasons, that Iranian troops did take the Iraqis by surprise. The most important of these is that Iranian troops had succeeded in concealing the direction of the offensive. It is most likely that Iraqi troops expected the Iranian offensive to destroy the island once again for the purpose of cutting the Baghdad-al-Basrah Road. Herein appears the Iranian troops' success in concealing the direction of the offensive. That success was

achieved because secrecy was imposed on the plan, because training was conducted in secrecy, or because the troops were assembled in secrecy far away from al-Faw, between Ahwaz and Dizful. This made it difficult for Iraqi troops to expect them. The second reason for the surprise was that Iranian troops took advantage of poor visibility conditions. The offensive was designed to begin at night so that the attacking troops could take advantage of the darkness and achieve the most success with the least possible intervention by the Iraqi air force in particular. The fact that it rained that day helped the Iranian troops. However, no one thinks that the effect of the rain was a factor in planning the offensive. Although Iranians were able to take advantage of the rain, their leaders could not have predicted at an early time when rainfall would come. It would also have been impossible to commence the offensive after the rainfall without previous arrangements. In general, poor visibility conditions turned out to be a neutral factor which had negative effects on both sides. Furthermore, weather conditions, including rainfall, do not by themselves have an effect on such an operation, since the side which can resist their negative effects can achieve a tremendous advantage if the other side fails to do so.

The fact that Iraqi intelligence failed to discover the direction of the coming offensive and when it would begin helped accomplish that surprise. There is no doubt that had Iraqi intelligence succeeded in discovering that, the picture would have been completely different from what it is now. It also seems that the Iraqi troops' level of combat readiness, particularly on the island of al-Faw was less than what it should have been. This is due in part to the aforementioned failure of intelligence. This is because the offensive had been expected for a long period of time all along the front, and that led automatically to a decline in the level of combat readiness. Although combat readiness declined because some of life's demands had to be met and because routine work had to be done, neither the leaders nor the troops who were surprised by the offensive can be excused because of that.

Selecting the Direction of the Principal Blow

The offensive plan was characterized by the fact that choosing to direct the principal strike against al-Faw Island was an intelligent and a good choice. The leadership realized the geopolitical and geostrategic importance of going in that direction. The offensive was launched against Iraq's Gulf outlet, and its aim was to utilize the narrow nature of that outlet to cut Iraq's access to the Gulf. Al-Faw was also Iraq's principal oil exporting port. Although operations there have been suspended for a long period of time, the port's value as a possible oil exporting outlet still remains. Its value also has an impact on morale. The fact that al-Basrah was also targeted in the offensive suggests the great value Iran could gain by capturing that city and the effect that would have on the stability of the government in Iraq and on the Shi'ite sect in south Iraq. Finally, taking the offensive in that direction could pose a threat to other Arabian Gulf countries should they continue their assistance to Iraq.

The geostrategic merit of launching the offensive in that direction lies in the fact that it almost denies Iraq's naval forces their bases in the Gulf. In addition, launching the offensive in that direction does not give Iraqi troops an opportunity to take advantage of the strategic superiority they have over Iran with their air force and armored vehicles in particular. This is because

salt marshes and palm forests are widespread in the area and because it is difficult to use the equipment outside Iraq. Thus, the directions of the strikes and counter-offensives would be extremely limited, and Iranian troops would not require large troops and formations to defend the targeted areas they captured. They could also keep Iraq's air force bases far away from Iran's oil facilities in the gulf and on the islands.

The Offensive in the Northern Sector

The secondary strike in the recent strategic offensive operation against the northern sector of the Iraqi front was directed against (Banjawin-al-Sulaymaniyah). Many sources called attention to the presence of the troops which carried out that attack. These troops had been there since the offensive on al-Faw Peninsula began. It seems that undermining the Iraqi troops defending the northern sector and preventing them from helping the troops fighting in the southern sector were the principal goals of that strike. Other objectives of the offensive included threatening Iraqi oil resources and applying pressure on the Iraqi economy to keep it from subsidizing the military position. In that regard the plan took several matters into consideration:

1. It took advantage of the rugged, mountainous nature of the territory to utilize Iran's manpower superiorirty and curb Iraq's superiority in equipment.

2. It attempted to exploit the population's political mood on the basis of their affiliation with the Kurdish sect, and it tried to turn them against the Iraqi people and the Iraqi government.

Despite its early success, this offensive turned out to be a dismal failure. Iraq was able to recapture most of the areas which Iranian troops had managed to occupy quickly, early in the offensive. Iraq did not have to withdraw any concrete requirements from al-Faw which were needed there, and what it did withdraw may have been limited. Iran allocated part of its air effort and that of the army's air effort and used them temporarily for the northern sector. Iranian troops also failed to win over the Kurdish population. Ultimately, Iraqi oil facilities continued to operate on a regular basis.

Iranian Plans for the Offensive

Admittedly, the Iranian plan did have several positive points, namely, the directions of the strikes were well chosen; the secrecy of the plan was well-preserved; deception was successfully used regarding the direction and the timing of the strikes; and combat operations, especially across water barriers, were properly safeguarded. Nevertheless, these positive points neither justify nor make up for the mistakes that were made by the Iranian leadership.

--The fact that the offensive was divided into two strikes weakened both strikes and caused each of them to fail to achieve its objectives. The general weakness of the Iranian troops' weaponry does not allow those troops to carry out two strong strikes.

--The 16-day delay in carrying out the other, secondary strike against (Banjawayn-al-Sulaymaniyah) enabled Iraq to confront the strikes one after the

other. Actually, Iraqi troops almost ignored the other strike because of that 16-day delay; they let the local leaadership deal with it.

--The Iranian plan underestimated the Iraqi troops and overestimated [the abilities] of the Iranian troops, relying on the weapons they had recently acquired. In general, Iraqi troops continue to maintain their superiority over Iran's military capability.

--The Iranian plan overestimated the effect of the difficult terrain. Although the terrain factor does have its merits, it is a neutral factor subject to whoever makes good use of it. Modern equipment can also function well in rugged terrain although at a lower efficiency than in ordinary terrain. It was thus easy for Iraq to annihilate the attacking troops in the mountainous region and to surround them on al-Faw Peninsula.

Iraqi Counterstrikes: the Counterstrike against al-Faw

Iraqi troops were not able to carry out a counterstrike as quickly as they had done in the past when they were previously attacked by Iran. This is basically due to the confusion that resulted from the surprise. The level of combat readiness was low and there were losses as a result of that. In addition, the terrain was difficult. Consequently, the Republican Guard Division was pressed into the combat region. It was announced that the counterstrike would begin with three motorized convoys on three centers. These motorized convoys achieved limited progress at an extremely low rate of speed. What came out was that Iraqi troops used a high concentration of fire power from surface to surface missiles or from motorized multi-head rocket launchers. Fire assistance was also provided from the air by fighter bombers or by armed helicopters to clinch the attack. Naval forces also took part in carrying out strikes against the troops and their supplies on al-Faw Peninsula.

The counterstrikes did not achieve their objectives either as a result of the difficulty of the terrain, the widespread salt marshes, or poor climate conditions. The fact that efforts were scattered among three centers, despite the fact that the principal efforts were being made against the southern motorized convoy, weakened all the centers.

The Counterstrike against al-Sulaymaniyah

This strike was characterized by the speed with which it was carried out. The strike managed to achieve quick results by destroying the troops that had broken through Iraqi lines toward al-Sulaymaniyah. Iraqi troops stuck to their goal; they were not withdrawn from al-Faw to ensure the success of this strike. Part of the air force's efforts was used to assist northern sector formations. It became evident that the formations in the mountains and the helicopters had succeeded in achieving their objectives, and it also became evident that Iranian troops had failed in their efforts to win over the Kurdish population or idle oil facilities.

The Iraqi Attack East of Baghdad

Early in May Iraq carried out an attack inside Iran, east of Baghdad around Mahran. Iraqi troops achieved limited success in that attack, capturing several

Iranian cities. It is known that Iraqi troops had not carried out attacks inside Iranian territory since 1982. Iraq had undertaken that initiative to conclude a peace between the two countries. Iraq adhered to its initiative until early this year. Iraqi troops were thus in a position that was at odds with the principles of war and the rules of conducting armed conflict.

Although in principle, the idea was a sound one, it is unreasonable for Iranian troops to attack, break through Iraq's borders and seize Iraqi territory while Iraq adheres to a defensive policy and does not attack the Iranian borders. This idea is particularly unreasonable because Iraq's equipment is superior to Iran's and Iraq can thus launch strong attacks against Iranian troops. Iraq's commitment to its initiative thus deprived it of the opportunity to use its resources to achieve its objectives. It is impossible to achieve any victory by means of defensive operations. However, the Iraqi attack shows that Iraqi leaders have drawn for themselves lines which they will not cross. They announced they would withdraw if Iran carries out a full withdrawal from the international borders.

This Iraqi view of the attack is considered inadequate since occupying territory does not have a great effect on the course of combat operations. An offensive must continue until the greater portion of the attacking troops are destroyed and the enemy is forced to give up his insistence on the objectives he wanted to achieve through war. An offensive must also change and make swift progress, so as to render the enemy unable to reorganize his troops and defenses.

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GULF NATIONS' MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS

Cairo AL-SIYASAH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic Jul 86 pp 116-125

[Article by Majdi 'Ali 'Atiyah: "The Military Effectiveness of the Gulf States and Iranian Threats"]

[Text] The Iran-Iraq war is going through its most critical stage [so far]. The possibility that the war may spill over into the Gulf states has become more evident than before. Feelings of anxiety and trepidation have become generally prevalent in the Gulf states, even though these countries have different views, positions and interests. This is because these feelings stem from an awareness that the situation could deteriorate in the coming stage, and serious consequences would then ensue as a result of the expansion of the war. Iran carried out its major offensive in March 1982, and Iraq gave up the Iranian territory it had occupied early in the war. In 1984 the war that was launched by Iraq began; this is the war that came to be known as the tankers' war. Kuwaiti and Saudi oil tankers were attacked from the air by Iraq and Iran. In March 1985 Iran attempted to launch a broad scale attack against Iraq, but Iraq was able to foil that attack and prevent Iranian troops from going deep into Iraqi territory. Since August 1985 Iraq has succeeded in partially delaying oil exports from Iran's Kharj Island in an attempt on its part to force Iran to enter into negotiations to put an end to the war which is now in its sixth year.

Iran carried out its major offensive in February 1986. It now occupies part of Iraqi territory, and it is trying to occupy the territory which links Iraq with the remaining countries of the Gulf. In light of the given facts about the recent Iranian offensive, Arabian Gulf countries are now more aware of the dangers inherent in Iran's military threat. The question that is being raised now has to do with the means used by Iran to threaten the Arabian Gulf states and the extent to which these countries can face up to those threats. The other side of this question, which is the essential point of this study, has to do with how effective the military capabilities of the Gulf states are. Does these states' strong effort to purchase different weapons systems and strengthen the aspects of military cooperation and coordination in their midst through the Gulf Cooperation Council strengthen their military capabilities enough to enable them to overcome these threats by relying on a self-reliance strategy? Or are the Gulf states still in such a state of feebleness and military weakness that they are unable to confront any challenges except by relying on foreign protection?

First, the Term, Military Effectiveness

Commentators provide different definitions of the term, military effectiveness. This is normal. In the military sciences, as in the rest of the social sciences, there is no consensus about what the ideas in those disciplines mean, even though contemporary developments in analytical approaches and methods for social phenomena have contributed to a large extent to overcoming this problem. However, the field of military studies is still in its first stage of achieving its own approaches and methods or borrowing those of other disciplines. This would give it the capability of describing, analyzing, measuring and predicting. On that basis, there are those who define "military effectiveness" as the ability to use military capabilities. [Translator's note: The notation for the first footnote is missing; the translator is assuming that the notation is missing from this part of the article.] (Footnote 1) (William D. Coplan, "Introduction to International Politics," Rand McNally College Publishing University, Chicago, 1974, p 112) There are also those who link the notion of military effectiveness with that of a latent military capability. (Footnote 2) (Thomas C. Schalling, "Arms and Influence," Yale University Press, London 1966, p 9) This means existing military capabilities and those that are actually available, in addition to whatever can be shifted to military use from resources and sources. There are also those who define the term as the ability to effect influence by using the military. (Footnote 3) (Douglas R. Murroy, [sic?] editor, "The Defence Policies of Nations: a Contemporary Study," Martin's Press, New York, 1982, p 16) Despite its numerous interpretations and definitions, the common denominator among all these definitions for the term, military effectiveness, is manifested in the following:

First, the notion of military effectiveness is linked to the notion of actual or latent military power.

Second, the notion of military effectiveness is essentially linked to [its] function, that is, to the goals and strategies adopted by the state and those which it hopes to accomplish by means of the military. It would thus be meaningless to deal with military effectiveness without dealing with the objectives. Accordingly, military effectiveness may be defined as "the ability to deal with internal and external threats by seeking the assitance of the military in the context of the state's national security policy." This definition implies the following meanings. First, it gives the notion of military effectiveness a dynamic nature by establishing a link between military capability and its function.

Second, this definition allows the approaches which are used in analyzing social phenomena, particularly the organizational and functional approaches, to be used in the field of military studies.

Before dealing in detail with the military effectiveness of the GCC countries, reference ought to be made to the fact that the last decade has brought about a concrete change in their military capabilities. The weapons market in the Gulf countries attracted the most modern weapons systems: missiles, airplanes, tanks and other weapons. Furthermore, there have been changes in established concepts about security, and there have also been changes in the organizationl makeup of these countries' armed forces.

First, Defense Coordination among the GCC Countries

Although the GCC countries saw the need for the formation of an Arab Gulf organization that would enable them to form an economic power to deal with other economic groups--that was the principal purpose for which the Gulf Cooperation Council was established on 25 May 1981--defense and security questions topped the list of priorities at the council's summit or ministerial meetings, as the Iran-Iraq war escalated and the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan continued. The Gulf countries were able to develop channels which could support their military coordination operation, relying therein on a step-by-step policy without resorting to a declaration that the armies of the GCC countries had been unified into one army under one command and one defense strategy. But these channels made that objective achievable over a long period of time. The most important channels which the GCC countries were able to achieve to strengthen the means for their military coordination were:

First, Summit Conferences and Ministers' Meetings

Such conferences contribute to a large extent to unifying the fixed notions about security which are held by leaders of the Gulf states. They help them become aware of the problems which impede their military coordination. The defense ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council held their first conference in Riyadh during the period from 25 to 26 January 1986. The second meeting for the chiefs of staff of the GCC countries was held in Riyadh on 15 March 1982. That meeting lasted for 2 days during which officials attending the meeting discussed how coordination between the GCC countries would be strengthened in the areas of defense. They also discussed practical methods for carrying out the resolutions and directives issued by the ministers of defense conference. On 18 October 1983 the third meeting of the chiefs of staff of the armed forces began at the offices of the General Secretariat in Riyadh. The chiefs of staff concluded their meeting after completing a study on how to standardize the military colleges' curricula. These recommendations were referred to the Supreme Council when it convened for its fourth session in Qatar on 9 November 1983. On 20 October 1985 the defense ministers of the GCC countries met in Kuwait, and they decided to approve the defense strategy as proposed by the chiefs of staff.

Second, Joint Exercises

The first joint military exercises were conducted on 10 October 1983 in the United Arab Emirates. They were called Dir' al-Jazirah 1 [Island Armor 1]. These operations were carried out in a desert area where sand dunes abounded. The Dir' al-Jazirah 2 exercises were conducted on 23 October 1984 in the area of (Hafr al-Batin) in the northeastern section of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The exercises included defensive and interceptive operations using live ammunition. The purpose of conducting such exercises is to allow the troops of the GCC countries to become accustomed to undiversified military activity. These exercises allow the troops to become familiar with the terrain so they can move in it under all conditions. The exercises also test the troops' defense capabilities.

Third, Establishing a Gulf Rapid Deployment Force

The six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council decided at the summit conference which was held in Kuwait in November 1984 to establish joint rapid

deployment forces to defend the Gulf area. These forces are to consist of two brigades, and they are to be based in the area of (Shu'ayb al-Batn), 32 kilometers north of Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. Each country is to participate in that force with a complete battalion and its support components. This force is to be made up of 6,000 men under the leadership of a Saudi lieutenant general who is to be assisted by officers from the remaining countries of the GCC. This force will be furnished with land and air weapons. (Footnote 4) (The Kuwaiti publication, AL-QABAS, 2 Nov 1985)

Fourth, Standardizing Air Defense Systems and Establishing a Joint Naval Command

The Joint Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense of the GCC countries decided on 10 October 1984 to establish a joint naval command which is to be stationed in al-Jubayl in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. (Footnote 5) (AL-AHRAM, 22 Oct 1984) This command is to be given a joint operations room. Implementation of an air defense plan for GCC countries was also started. This plan includes linking the commanders of the armies of the GCC countries and the operations rooms with direct telephone lines.

Fifth, Establishing a Gulf Weapons Industry

With regard to establishing a weapons industry for the Gulf states, the sum of 140 million dollars has been appropriated to establish this project. However, the most important difficulties facing operations are manifested in two matters: First, the countries of the council do not have the required industrial base; and second, the necessary sources of water are not available. This means that it would be essential to get the assistance of other Arab countries. These countries could be Iraq, Jordan or Egypt.

There are difficulties preventing integrated military cooperation between the countries of the Gulf. These difficulties may be summarized as follows:

First, a Legacy of Past Border Disputes: Suspicion and mistrust continue to play a role in preventing the military unification of the Gulf states. The small emirates are fearful of losing themselves in the larger entities, and border problems are still influencing the political process. News about the military confrontation between Qatar and Bahrain recently proves that. There are numerous disputes around the borders. Among those that have been resolved was Iran's claim for Bahrain which was declared null and void in 1970. The dispute between Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi over al-Barimi Oasis was resolved in 1974. Other disputes which have not been resolved [include] the dispute between Bahrain and Qatar over al-Hawar islands; their dispute over the village of Dabarah in the Qatar Peninsula; the dispute between Sharjah, 'Ujman and Umm al-Qawayn over the territorial waters near Abu Musa Island; the dispute between Dubayy and al-Shariqah over an area that has been economically developed and is located on the borders between them; and the dispute between Ra's al-Khaymah and Oman over their borders on the Musandam Peninsula. (Footnote 6) (Dr Hasan 'Ali al-Ibrahim, "Al-Duwal al-Saghirah wa al-Nizam al-Duwali" [Small Countries and the International System], the Institute of Arabic Research, Beirut 1982, p 122)

Second, Rivalry between the Ruling Families: Lineage and kinship factors still play a vital role in the political interactions of the ruling families in the

Gulf. The rivalry between the ruling family in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the ruling family in Kuwait may have played a prominent role in the manner in which Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar won their independence in 1976. There is also personal rivalry between members of the ruling family in Abu Dhabi and members of the ruling family in Dubai inspite of the fact that these two countries are members of the Federation of Arab Emirates.

Both al-Shaykh Zayid, the ruler of Abu Dhabi, and al-Shaykh Rashid, the ruler of Dubai are still vying with each other for influence. Also the dispute between Qatar and Bahrain has its roots in the allegation made by Bahrain's ruling family of having a claim on parts of Qatar. Tribal chauvinism played a major role in the fact that Bahrain's ruling family refused to enter into negotiations with the Al-Thani family to form a federation. The rivalry between families in Bahrain and Qatar prevented these countries from forming any kind of political unity. However, these countries are brought together by a collection of common interests which transcend their divisions and disputes. Most important of these common interests are those which they have in preventing radical groups from obtaining a foothold in the area; keeping the oil flowing abroad; and obtaining the largest return possible from oil sales. Such common interests may be the principal motives for economic and defense coordination among the GCC countries. However, the disappearance of external and internal threats would once again bring back the disputes and feuds. (Footnote 7) (Hassein Amirs A. Deghi, editor, "The Security of Persian Gulf," Groom Hall, London 1981, p 170)

Third, Differences over the Principles of Building the Armed Forces of the GCC Countries with regard to Human Resources, Weapons Sources and the Sources of Military Knowledge: We ought to mention that these countries have six kinds of tanks which require different ammunition and spare parts. There are more than 10 kinds of airplanes, and the ammunition, fuel, spare parts and principal repair and maintenance operations required for these airplanes are difficult to obtain. It is also difficult to know which is which, and it is also difficult for military leaders to reach an understanding about operations and tactics. That reduces their efficiency considerably.

The Military Balance of the GCC Countries and Iran

Before the Iran-Iraq war the Iranian threat to the GCC countries was more of an ideological threat than a military threat. This threat was principally manifested in the attempt to export the Khomeyni Revolution to the surrounding Islamic countries, especially the countries of the Arabian Gulf. Iran's attempt to export its revolution was confirmed by the incident in Holy Mecca. At that time Iran did not have as much military power as it did during the reign of the Shah, but the war compelled it and induced it to improve its military conditions and reorganize its army after it came close to being defeated militarily by Iraq in 1982. It was its efforts to improve military conditions and reorganize the army that enabled Iran to reach an equal standing with Iraq. In fact, it even occupied part of Iraqi territory in al-Faw Peninsula. The question that is being asked now is this: How can Iran threaten the Gulf countries? The possibilities that are being raised in this regard are: First, Iran could launch an attack by sea or from the air, and that is a matter made easier by the geographic and demographic nature of the Gulf area, which is a desert region whose lands are open and unobstructed. It is an area that provides a battlefield in which all

kinds of traditional weapons may be used. Furthermore, the population density in most Gulf countries is very low and cannot constitute any problem that would hinder the advance of invading troops in the area. In addition, almost the entire coastline of the Gulf is considered to be suitable for the kind of sea landing which is also preferred by airborne troops.

Second, Iran attempted to close the Straits of Hormuz: Iran can close the Straits of Hormuz if the United States and the Euroepan countries do not interfere. Such an operation could be difficult and may require mining of the waters and other things, but, at any rate, Iran can impede navigation by striking tankers. Third, Iran can occupy the south of Iraq, and it can encroach upon the territory of the Gulf countries, particularly Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. This gives Iran an opportunity to push its land troops into invading the territory of Gulf countries.

One can find out the extent to which the GCC countries can deal with such threats by reviewing the features of the military balance between Iran and the GCC countries. This balance assumes in advance that the armies of these countries are subject to one strategy and to the same military leadership. Consequently, it is assumed that the powers of the GCC countries are standing collectively against Iran. If we were to disregard the time factor and its effects--and these undoubtedly leave their mark on the balance of power--then what is understood to be the military balance will not include auxiliary factors which affect military capability. These factors manifest themselves in weapons and auxiliary systems, and these include military equipment components that generally do not have a direct effect on combat. However, the indirect effect this equipment does have, such as reconnaissance equipment, night vision devices and so on, could lead to significant results. In addition, there is another factor that is not taken into account. It has to do with the differences in weapons and systems specifications. Comparing one tank to another or one airplane to another involves disregarding many things. Each piece of equipment has its own specifications. Moreover, there are other factors which affect all the figures in the balance. These are political, geographical and moral factors which would be difficult to illustrate in quantitative terms. (Footnote 8) (Staff Maj Gen Tal'at Ahmad Muslim, "Al-Mizan al-'Askari fi al-Sira' al-'Arabi-al-Isra'ili" [The Military Balance in the Arab-Israeli Conflict], AL-MANAR Magazine, No 10, Oct 1985)

Data about the balance of power may be studied [and examined] in Table 1.

The land forces in GCC countries have a secondary position. This is due to the fact that the population in those countries is small but the terrain is vast. The vastness of the terrain requires that the size of the armed forces in those countries be increased, but this is not possible because population figures in those GCC countries are low. The land forces of the GCC countries have a general density of 0.04 per 10.00 square kilometers, whereas Iranian forces have a density of 0.15 per 10.00 square kilometers. This is also evident in Table 1. As far as tanks are concerned, GCC countries have different kinds of tanks. The M-60 and the AMX-30 are the most important tanks in armored units. Out of a total number of 883 tanks owned by GCC countries, 580 are M-60 and AMX-30. In addition, GCC countries own 243 British Chieftain and Centurion tanks. That

figure represents one third the number of Chieftain and Centurion tanks owned by Iran. However, these tanks are not all that important, when compared with the Soviet-made T-54, T-62 and T-72 tanks, and there are 1,500 of those. The T-62 tank, which is equipped with a 115 mm caliber gun, can travel at a speed of 30 miles [an hour]. The T-72 tank is the most modern Soviet-made tank.

We can thus deduce that Iran has a qualitative superiority over GCC countries because it has the most modern Soviet tanks as well as the most modern American M-60 tanks. Iran also has more tanks than the GCC countries collectively; it has about twice the number of tanks they have, and that too is evident from the table. GCC countries have 3.3 tanks per 10.00 square kilometers, but Iran has 11.5 principal combat tanks per 10.00 square kilometers. As far as combat vehicles are concerned, we find the M-113 armored personnel carrier to be the backbone of the armored troops in the GCC countries, particularly in Saudi Arabia. These armored personnel carriers make up almost half the total number of armored vehicles that are found in GCC countries. These vehicles, which are amphibious, can carry 13 men, including the driver, and they can travel at up to 40 miles an hour. They are equipped with 14.5 mm caliber machine guns. In addition to the M-113 vehicles, GCC countries have other combat vehicles, most importantly the AMX-10p, the Banhard, and the AML-90. On the other side Iranian armored units have Soviet-made armored personnel carriers, in addition to the M-113 carriers. These BTR-50, BTR-60, and BTR-125 armored personnel carriers are amphibious: the BTR-60 carrier can carry from 10 to 13 infantry soldiers; the BTR-50 carrier can carry 15 men; and the BTR-125 carrier can carry more than 15 individuals. The BTR-60 is armed with 7.62 mm caliber mechanical guns, which may be used to launch anti-tank missiles. The carrier is also equipped with night vision devices. The BTR-50 carrier has four 7.62 mm caliber, 12.7 mm caliber and 14.5 mm caliber machineguns. It too is equipped with night vision equipment. The BTR-125 carrier has 12.7 mm caliber and 7.62 mm machineguns with two 14.5 caliber anti-aircraft machineguns. This means that although GCC countries have more than 2.9 times the number of combat vehicles that Iran has, Iran does have a qualitative advantage in the intensity of the fire power of its vehicles. These vehicles which may be used in numerous ways have a greater capacity. In the final analysis, however, it may be said that GCC countries have begun to become aware of the importance of turning their troops into mechanized troops. As far as artillery pieces are concerned, Iran also has more artillery guns. It has a total number of 4,150 guns compared with 761 owned by the GCC countries. In addition to having more guns, the quality of Iran's equipment is also superior. In addition to M-1964, M-46 and M-116 guns; M-101, M-109 and M-114 Howitzers; and M-30 mortar guns, Iran also has guided anti-tank TOW, Dragon, SS-11 and SS-12 guns.

Iran also has surface to surface Scud missiles which can be used against air defense positions, military troop concentrations, economic centers and vital facilities. The Gulf countries have introduced some concrete change in their artillery by supplying their forces with advanced pieces of artillery which are characterized by their heavy fire power and the precision with which they can hit their target.

The Balance of Air Power

The air force in GCC countries occupies a position of distinction. By relying on the air force GCC countries can make up for the discernible inadequacy in their

manpower. The air force does not require as much manpower as land forces do. This is evident in the Gulf states' armaments policy where the interest is concentrated on purchasing the most modern airplanes in the weapons market. That is why they have an integrated combination of modern airplanes. The most prominent of these airplanes is the French-made Mirage F-IC fighter, which is comparable to the Russian made MIG-21 fighter. That airplane can travel at twice the speed of sound; it has a range of 745 miles; it is equipped with two 30 mm guns; and it can carry two bombs each of which weighs 1,000 pounds. The GCC countries also have British Hunter fighter airplanes. This is a one-seat airplane which can travel at a speed of 700 miles an hour; it is equipped with four 30 mm caliber guns; and it carries two 1,000-pound bombs and two 500-pound bombs. This airplane can carry two tanks of fuel. GCC countries also have American F-5E, F4D and FE airplanes. These airplanes are equipped with advanced electronic equipment, and they operate in all climates. The F-4E has a range of 2,200 miles. It is a long range airplane that is distinguished by its ability to maneuver. GCC countries have more interceptor airplanes than Iran does. They have seven times the number of interceptor airplanes Iran has. In addition, they have a varied combination of interceptor airplanes, the most prominent of which is the Lightning, which is suitable for all climates and can travel at a speed of 1,400 miles an hour. The Lightning is equipped with two 30 mm calbier guns and two air to air missiles. In addition, there are other kinds of interceptor airplanes, as is evident from Table 5. The Gulf states are trying to strengthen their air force with helicopters because helicopters offer numerous advantages in transporting supplies, materiel and soldiers. Helicopters also carry out electronic jamming functions, and they are used in combat support missions. The importance of helicopter and transport airplanes emerges in the support they provide to the Gulf Rapid Deployment Force to increase its ability to travel quickly to areas whose security is threatened. The Gulf states also have more helicopters and transport airplanes than Iran does. GCC countries attach greater importance to internal threats. This is evident in the care they give to acquiring airplanes which are specially designated for combating rebellion and disobedience. There are 24 of these airplanes. Besides, GCC countries try to support their air defense systems by furnishing these systems with a network of anti-aircraft advanced missiles: Hawk improved missiles, Stinger missiles and other anti-aircraft missiles and guns.

The Naval Balance of Power

The naval force of the GCC countries consists basically of torpedo boats, gunboats and patrol boats. Such naval vessels are designated primarily for defending the coastline. Thus, the naval vessels owned by the Gulf countries are defensive in nature. They do not have the ability to carry out strikes against the Iranian navy on the high seas. But in addition to owning torpedo boats, gunboats and patrol boats, Iran also has other kinds of large naval vessels such as destroyers and frigates. The destroyers are armed with Standard missiles and Seacat surface-to-air missiles; the frigates are also amred with surface to surface missiles and with surface-to-air missiles as well. Despite the fact that the GCC countries have more naval vessels, as Table 6 shows, the Iranian navy, inspite of its standard, does pose a real threat. It can land forces; it can shell Gulf ports; and it can strike oil exporting centers.

As Table 7 shows, the following conclusions may be reached on the basis of studying the various data on the military balance of the GCC countries opposite Iran. First, the military capability of each country in the Gulf Cooperation Council is characterized by weakness and fragility against Iran. None of these countries by itself can oppose any Iranian land, air or naval attack. Because Saudi Arabia comes close to having a strategic balance with Iran, it constitutes the center of the GCC countries' military capability. Second, the weak link in the military capability is manifested in the GCC countries' land force, which lacks the manpower the military equipment and the field experience that Iran has. The greatest danger in the series of Iranian threats may be the presence of Iranian troops on al-Faw Peninsula which can turn into a base and a staging point from which an invasion of the Gulf states by hordes of Iranians can be launched. Third, the air power of the GCC countries is greater than that of Iran. Furthermore, their air defense systems are more modern, and that provides them with an effective air defense. If Iran attacks the Gulf states, it is not expected to rely on its air force, which suffers from a shortage of necessary spare parts. Iran's air force is also small, and its naval operations are slow. They are, therefore, unsuitable to the nature of short and swift wars. The only thing Iran can do to make use of its air force is to use it to interfere with navigation in the Gulf and close the Straits of Hormuz. At any rate, the military capability of all the GCC countries collectively is almost equal to that of Iran in a few areas, and it is superior to Iran's in other areas. It is thus possible to imagine that together, the Gulf countries can use their military to oppose Iranian threats in case of an air attack. But if the Straits of Hormuz are closed or if Iranian soldiers come from al-Faw Peninsula into the Gulf states, the Gulf states' military capability will be considerably limited.

Table 1

A Comparison of Population, Area and Army Density Figures in GCC Countries and in Iran

The State	Population	Area	Number of Men in Army	Density in Army
	Million	Km^2	Soldiers	Per Km^2
Bahrain	0.4	678	2,300	3.4
Oman	1.6	300,000	16,500	0.05
Kuwait	1.8	17,818	10,000	0.6
Qatar	0.3	11,437	5,000	0.43
Saudi Arabia	12	2,240,000	35,000	0.02
The United Emirates	1.4	73,000	43,000	0.58
The GCC countries collectively	17.5	2,645,933	111,800	0.04
Iran	43	1,648,000	250,000	0.15
Comparing the GCC countries to Iran	0.4	1.6	4.4	0.28

The principal source: 1985-1986 Military Balance

Table 2

Principal Combac Tanks

State - Model	Bahrain	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	United Emirates	Total tanks for GCC Countries	Iran	Comparing GCC Countries with Iran
Vickers MK	..	70	..	..	..	..	70	..	
Centurion	..	10	..	..	..	..	10	..	
Chieftain	..	160	27	..	..	..	187	300	
M-60A	..	..	6	..	150	..	156	250	
AMX-30	..	..	..	24	300	100	424	..	
Of-40 MK 2 Lion,	..	..	..	..	..	36	36	..	
T-54, T-55, T-62	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,050	
T-72	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	100	
M-47, M-48	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	200	
Total tanks	..	240	33	24	450	136	883	1,900	0.46
Density of tanks per 10.00 square kilometers							3.3	11.5	

The Source: 1985-1986 IISS Military Balance

Table 3

Comparison of Combat Vehicles

Model - State	Bahrain	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	United Emirates	Total combat vehicles for GCC Countries	Iran	Comparing GCC Countries with Iran
AML-90	20	..	..	..	200	..	220	..	
Saladin	8	100	..	..	..	..	108	..	
Ferret	..	60	..	10	..	..	70		
Saracen	..	100	..	25	..	..	125		
M-113	..	175	..	..	1,300	..	1,475	25	
Banhard	..	..	..	..	..	300	300	..	
AMX-IOP	..	..	..	30	350	..	380	..	
AMX-VCI	..	..	..	..	..	30	30	..	
Shorland	110	..	..	..	..	..	110	..	
VPC-90	..	..	6	..	..	..	6	..	
VAP-VCI	..	..	6	136	..	..	142	500	
PTR/- ho/ 125 /co	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
PMP-1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	180	
AT-105	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Commando MK	..	..	15	..	..	..	15	..	
EE-11	..	..	..	8	..	..	.. [sic]	..	
Caxanel	..	..	..	..	30	30	60	130	
Total vehicles	138	435	27	209	1,880	360	3,049	1,060	2.9

The Source: 1958-1968 IISS Military Balance

Table 4

A Comparison of Artillery Pieces

State	Number of Artillery Pieces
Bahrain	20
Kuwait	20
Oman	87
Qatar	14
Saudi Arabia	550
The United Emirates	70
Total for the GCC countries	761
Iran	4,150
A comparison between the GCC countries and Iran	2

The Source: 1985-1986 IISS Military Balance

Table 5

Comparison of Airplanes

State Classification		Bahrain	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	United Emirates	Total airplanes for GCC Countries	Iran	Comparing GCC Countries with Iran
Fighters	A-4 KU	..	30	..	..	..	..	30	..	
	Jaguar	..	..	20	..	..	..	20	..	
	T-2	..	..	4	..	..	..	4	..	
	Mirage F-1C	..	..	..	5	..	..	5	..	
	Hunter F j A-6	..	..	..	3	..	..	3	..	
	T-7Y	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	
	Alphajet	..	..	..	8	..	3	11	..	
	F-5E	..	..	..	..	65	..	65	45	
	F-4D / Alphajet E	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	35	
	Total	..	30	24	17	65	3	139	80	1.7
Interceptor airplanes	Mirage F-1CK	..	32	..	..	..	..	32	..	
	F-1BK	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	..	
	Lightning	..	..	..	..	15	..	15	..	
	T-55	..	..	..	..	2	..	2	..	
	F-15C	..	..	..	..	62		62	..	
	Mirage 5AD	..	..	..	..	..	24	24	..	
	5 RAD	..	..	..	..	..	3	3	..	
	5 DAD	..	..	..	..	..	2	2	..	
	F-14	..	..	..	..	..	..	142	20	
	Total	..	34	..	..	79	29	..	20	7.1
Helicopters	AB-212	10	7	4	..	10	..	3	5	
	BO-105	3	..	..	..	..	..	2 [sic]	..	
	Hughes	2	..	..	..	..	..	3 [sic]	..	
	Sikorsky	..	..	3	..	..	..	18[sic]	12	
	AB-206	..	..	..	..	12	6	.. [sic]	10	
	Bell	..	..	..	..	..	..		39	
	CH-47 chinook	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	
	Gazelle	..	4	..	2	..	10	16	..	
	Puma	..	12	2	..	..	13	27	..	
	Alouette	..	9	..	..	..	7	126	..	
	Westland	..	..	..	9	..	..	9	..	
	AB-205	..	..	20	..	14	8	42	..	
	AB-214	..	..	5	..	..	..	5		
	Total	15	32	34	11	36	44	172	76	2.2

Table 5

Comparison of Airplanes

State Classification		Bahrain	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	United Emirates	Total airplanes for GCC Countries	Iran	Comparing GCC Countries with Iran
Transport Airplanes	C-130 ELH	..	..	3	..	49	4	56	26	
	F-27	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	
	Aero commandor	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	
	Mystere-Falcon	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	4	
	Boeing 707	..	..	..	2	..	..	2	10	
	Boeing 747	..	..	..	1	..	1	2	7	
	DC-9	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	..	
	L-100-20	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	..	
	L-100-30	..	4	..	..	..	1	5	..	
	BAC-111	..	..	3	..	..	..	3	..	
	Defende Islander	..	..	7	1	..	5	13	..	
	Skyvan	..	..	15	..	..	..	15	..	
	KC-130 H	..	..	..	..	8	..	8	..	
	Jetstar	..	..	..	..	2	..	2	..	
	C-222	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	
	C-212	..	..	..	..	..	4	4	..	
	DHC - 5D	..	..	..	..	..	9	9	..	
	Cessna	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	
	Total	..	8	29	4	59	26	126	59	2.1
Recon-naissance Airplanes	F-14A	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	
	RF-4E	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	
	Hunter F 6A-6	..	..	12	..	..	..	12	..	
	T-7	..	..	4	..	..	..	4	..	
	AWACS E - 3A	..	..	..	..	4	..	4	..	
	Total	..	..	16	..	4		20	8	
Airplanes for fighting rebellion	Hawk	..	12	..	..	..	..	12	..	
	Strikemaster	..	..	12	..	..	..	12	..	
	MB-326 KD	..	..	..	..	..	10	10	..	
	Total	..	12	12	..	..	10	34	..	
Other Airplanes	F-5F	..	..	..	..	24	..	24	..	
	F-5B	..	..	..	..	16	..	16	..	
	TF-15 D	..	..	..	..	17	..	17	..	
	Total	..	..	..	..	57	..	57	..	
Total airplanes		15	116	115	32	300	112	690	243	2.8

The Source: 1985-1986 IISS Military Balance

Table 6

Comparison of Naval Vessels

State Classification	Bahrain	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	United Emirates	Total for GCC Countries	Iran	Comparing GCC Countries with Iran
Destroyers	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	
Frigates	..	..	..	..	4	..	4	4	
Corvettes	..	..	..	..	4	..	4	1	
Mine sweepers	..	..	..	..	4	..	4	2	
Landing vessels	..	..	..	..	3	..	3	4	
Support & Supply Vessels	..	2	2	..	2	2	9	4	
Torpedo Boats	2	6	..	..	..	..	8	..	
Gunboats	2	2	4	3	9	6	26	7	
Patrol Boats	..	48	4	6	1	9	68	7 - 2 left	
Landing Boats	..	9	5	..	16	..	30	1	
Total Naval Vessels	4	68	15	9	43	17	156	28	5.57

The Source: 1985-1986 IISS Military Balance

Table 7

Comparison of the Military Balance between Iran and Each Gulf State

Classification / State	Bahrain	Iran	Comparison	Kuwait	Iran	Comparison	Oman	Iran	Comparison	Qatar	Iran	Comparison	United Emirates	Iran	Comparison	Saudi Arabia	Iran	Comparison
Tanks	—	1,900	—	240	1,900	7.9	33	1,900	57.5	24	1,900	79.1	136	1,900	13.9	450	1,900	4.2
Combat vehicles	138	1,060	7.7	435	1,060	2.4	27	1,060	39.2	209	1,060	5.07	360	1,060	2.9	1,880	1,060	0.6
Artillery	20	4,150	207.5	20	4,150	207.5	87	4,150	47.7	14	4,150	296.4	70	4,150	59.3	550	4,150	7.5
Airplanes	15	243	16.2	116	243	2.09	115	243	2.1	32	243	7.5	112	243	2.1	300	243	0.8
Naval vessels	4	28	0.7	68	28	0.4	15	28	1.8	9	28	3.1	17	28	1.64	43	28	0.6

1885-1986 [sic] IISS Military Balance

END
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